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SUBJECT: CANADA, S DIMINISHING PRESENCE ON WORLD STAGE --
DOES CONCERN IN CANADA EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ENHANCED
ENGAGEMENT?

Classified By: Polmincouns Brian Flora, reasons 1.4 (b) (d)

1. (C) Summary: A recent report reflecting the views of world leaders and policymakers on Canada's slippage in global clout has caused a small stir here. The paper by the former President of Bombardier International posits that Canada should put muscle behind its human security agenda by creating a rapid deployment brigade that can move quickly to global hotspots; act as a Global Think Tank on tough international issues and governance challenges; craft the next North American agenda; provide renewed leadership in development; and use education to build relationships with a new generation of decision-makers around the world. Canada's eagerness to find a relevant role presents us with an opportunity to engage them on any number of issues. With the right urging and coordination, Canada may be able to offer more help to the Middle East Peace Process, for example, or could take on a leadership role in Haiti. End Summary

IS CANADA MAKING A DIFFERENCE?

2. (SBU) A report on Canada's place in the world released January 27 by former President of Bombardier International Robert Greenhill has received some attention here over the past several weeks. This and the upcoming International Policy Review (Septel) may provide an opportunity for us to engage Canada and find synergy in working on certain global issues. The paper, "Making a Difference? External Views on Canada's International Impact" follows in the wake of several books in recent years such as "Who Killed the Canadian Military" and "While Canada Slept" that decried the slippage of Canada's international position from middle power to muddling power.

3. (C) Along with Jennifer Welch's "A Place in the World," this line of thought is that Canada needs to find a comfortable but prominent place on the global stage which plays on its strengths as a multi-cultural, successfully governed country with a dynamic economy and highly-talented populace. This niche would be independent of, but closely related to, the United States. Most recommendations affirm that Canada should maintain its neutrality and use that position to help in the world where others with historical baggage cannot, but not obsess so much over neutrality as to end up inert.

4. (SBU) Greenhill's approach differed from this traditional Canadian naval gazing by going out into the world and engaging current and former global policy makers such as John Hamre, Richard Haass, Henry Kissinger, and Jeffrey Sachs (among others from Africa, Europe and Asia) to see how they view Canada. His intent was to clarify what international role Canada has traditionally played in the view of world leaders, and to make specific recommendations about what role it should play in the future. Greenhill presented his paper at a conference sponsored by Canada 25, an organization of young people who seek greater influence and involvement in Canadian foreign policy. He effectively stole the show, and press reports on the conference the next day did not even mention the presence of Jennifer Welch on the panel, or the sponsors themselves. Rather they went right to Greenhill's findings and conclusions - the National Post headlining "Canada Virtually Insignificant on World Stage," and the Ottawa Citizen decrying "Canada Now a Bit Player Globally, Survey Finds."

YOU ARE LIVING OFF YOUR REPUTATION

5. (SBU) The paper, which was written using Chatham House rules, is eminently quotable, and has one Canadian interviewee summing up Canada's diminishing influence with Washington by saying "10 years ago, Canada had little influence in Washington. Now it has less." An American said "You are not on the radar screen down here, including with foreign policy elites." A third, "never did anyone in the planning process say 'before doing this we must talk to Canada.'" Most of those interviewed remembered a time when Canada mattered, but as one individual summed up, referring specifically to peacekeeping: "for the past 15 years you have lived off your reputation." Others lamented that Canada had

not kept up with the changing world, one stating that Canada was once a bridge between the US and UK, but "the UK co-opted your strategy, and positioned themselves as the bridge between the US and Europe." The most damning was the simple statement referring to the debacle of whether or not to support the Iraq operation: "Canada has taken itself off the list of friends."

16. (C) But Greenhill is not just interested in a snivelfest, his key intention is to move Canadian policymakers to start to make the hard decisions to return Canada to a position of prominence on the world stage. His conclusion is that the country needs to "differentiate and focus." He says Canada should decide on a few areas, invest deeply and become indispensable: in those areas Canada should be considered pre-eminent, in terms of experience, capabilities, and resources." The areas he suggests are:

-- Putting muscle behind the human security agenda. In what was the most noteworthy of his recommendations for the press, Greenhill recommends that Canada create a swift, mobile, and autonomous brigade of peacekeepers that could be dispatched in the first weeks of an emergency and sustained for at least two months. It could provide rapid conflict resolution, rapid humanitarian relief, or muscular enforcement under the Responsibility to Protect. It would be particularly useful in areas where other countries with similar capabilities would not be able to intervene because of political or historical baggage.

-- Acting as a Global Think Tank on tough international issues and governance challenges. The idea here is to take issues of global significance, e.g. UN reform, a new nuclear fuel cycle protocol to reduce the dangers of proliferation, conservation of the oceans, post-Kyoto climate change accord, and bring together the best minds in the world to explore new options. It would be a results-oriented, extremely focused effort to tackle issues that are either stuck in traditional IO's or are not receiving adequate attention.

-- Crafting the next North American agenda. This is a somewhat vague recommendation that involves stronger direct involvement with Mexico to better work the issues of energy, security, immigration, and the environment.

-- Providing renewed leadership in development. Greenhill looks at the success of a number of European countries, especially Britain, in developing more effective aid agencies, and recommends Canada make this a priority. It would, he said, require sectoral and regional focus, and a simple increase in resources.

-- Using education to build relationships with a new generation of decision-makers around the world. Through educational programs and partnerships abroad, Canada could make a difference in education and establish key links with the developing world in the process.

U.S.-CANADA COORDINATION

17. (C) The DCM and Polcouns met with Mr. Greenhill on January 6 to discuss his findings and how they have been received in Ottawa. Greenhill believes his paper will add to the debate here but was not sure it has a particular champion in the current government. Independent of his study, however, he believes that Canada is seeking a way to become more prominent and play a more active role in the world, and the notion of focusing is starting to resonate. Rather than having 2-3 percent of the force in every peacekeeping mission on earth, he postulated, Canada would like to have 10-30 percent of a few missions, and take more of a long-term leadership role in them.

18. (C) Greenhill said that the U.S., however, must be extremely careful in how it promotes greater Canadian involvement in the world. Iraq is for the current generation, Greenhill said, a kind of Viet Nam experience, which has turned young Canadians against the U.S. in a knee-jerk reaction. Overt U.S. urging that Canada take a more activist global position or increase defense spending will simply not be well received here, and will generally be counter-productive. But Greenhill believes that behind the scenes, working with Canadian policymakers, we can find a good deal of synergy and help Canada find its niche. If we could identify the one or two issues where Canada could lead, we could quietly work with the GOC to carve out a viable role.

THE MIDDLE EAST AND HAITI

19. (C) The two places that came to mind for Greenhill are the Middle East and Haiti. On the Middle East, Greenhill said that Canada has been seeking a more active role on its own, but believes that only with very specific back-channel coordination with the U.S. would it be effective. On Haiti,

Greenhill sees the current program as one of avoiding failure without committing fully to success. He believes Haiti is made to order for a Canadian leadership role in terms of language, resource requirements, and risk. Why couldn't Canada take on the leadership of Haiti's reconstruction for a sustained period of time -- ten years if that is what it takes, he asked? Again he believes that only with close coordination and behind-the-scenes urging from the United States would this happen.

10. (C) Comment: Greenhill's paper has Canadians thinking. It provides a good opportunity for us to engage with them on these issues and if we believe it would be helpful, to discreetly propose several places where they could play a leadership role in the world. Greenhill himself suggested the usefulness of an extended discussion with Canadian foreign policy planners, at the Asst. Secretary level. Such a discussion could highlight areas for Canadian involvement/leadership role. We agree and would be willing to facilitate this kind of discussion.

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